Nutrition for accelerating AfricaRISING

The working team on Nutrition components of AfricaRISING discussed about the importance of nutrition in SSA and acknowledged the increasing interest of the global community and increasing investment needs that should be dedicated to nutrition.

The team started by taking stalk of the AfricaRISING research work that has been conducted in the AfricaRISING countries / regions in the last three years. The major engagements are the following:

In Ethiopia:

1. Qualitative studies on assessing nutrition environment
2. Assessment of food systems impacting nutrition
3. Dietary assessment of women and children
4. Assessment of knowledge attitudes and practices related to nutrition in Ethiopia
5. Research work on assessing the effects of various fertilizer blends on crop quality and livestock feed quality
6. Effect of cropping systems on household nutrition security and asset building
7. Communication products emerged from recent Writeshop organized by Africa RISING.

In Tanzania:

1. Collection of food samples from representative households and nutritional assessment
2. Diet diversity study on selected households
3. Assessing storage facility and subsequent effects on nutrition security
4. Capacity building and nutrition education to develop protein dense food items
5. Development of diversified food recipe
6. Evaluation of maize fortification and its accessibility to the poor through working with millers
7. Examples from Nafaka, study on the distribution of fortified maize through distributors; checking the distribution on who buys and accesses the mill
8. QPM maize and its potential benefits; tradeoffs within the farming system
9. Partnership with AVRDC in getting vegetable to the farmers’ fields
10. Study on poultry value chains
11. The challenge of all this work not being guided by nutritionists

In Mali:

1. Understanding the pattern of vegetable production and consumption;
2. Nutritional and dietary assessment;
3. Nutrition barrier studies , KAP studies
4. Development of nutrition guide for agricultural extension workers / training resources
5. Development and facilitation of model nutrition support group

In Ghana:

* Food demonstrations to rural households
* Surveying nutritional status of households in Africa RISING sites
* Training health extension workers
* Poultry, small ruminants, pigs for income and nutrition
* Facilitating behavioral change of communities towards nutrition sensitive agriculture
* The challenges of measuring dietary biodiversity

Participants also discussed the various Nutrition approaches that should be considered, which may include:

* Integration of various disciplines; production from farms, marketing challlenges, landscapes diversity, processing to household nutrition;
* Clearly identify nutrition specific impact pathways through increasing income, home gardens, adjusting cropping systems, nutrition education
* Developing demand driven approaches to nutrition
* Diversifying systems to nutrition through improved soil nutrient management, home gardens, irrigation fields , livestock products
* Mapping of actors working in nutrition in various countries
* Identify entry points for effective nutrition outcomes